



SWINDON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Paralegal – Child Care Team Role Profile

Job Title: Paralegal (Legal Assistant) (Childcare)	Role Profile Number:
Grade: M Salary:	Date Prepared: January 2020
Directorate/Group: Resources	Reporting to: Principal Childcare Solicitor
Structure Chart attached:	Yes

Job Purpose

To provide a comprehensive legal support to the child care team and the legal department as a whole. To assist the legal team to offer legal services to members and officers of the Council in terms of transactional work and advice, providing and preparing legal advice and legal documentation.

To provide comprehensive legal service and advice to the council, with supervision and hold their own cases in relation to two or more areas

To provide transactional support and advice, including providing and preparing legal documentation and assisting officers of the Council.

Key Accountabilities

- to assist lawyers within the team as required in the preparation and case management of cases held within the team
- to assist and advise the Children's Services Department in the Pre-proceedings process
- to handle routine legal matters and take responsibility in respect of the council's legal functions, that are undertaken by the Childcare team, as directed

- to correspond and liaise with client departments, external solicitors, barristers, experts and other agencies;
- to draft legal documents in the progression of cases , including but not limited to applications, threshold case summaries, statements of fact, brief to counsel for the purpose of making and progressing applications before the Court.
- to manage a caseload of non complex legal work
- to undertake advocacy in non complex matters
- to analytically consider documents and evidence provided by the client department and other parties and assist in the drafting and collation of Local Authority evidence
- To assist the team in the development and maintenance of templates for legal documentation, liaising with client departments and provide updates on legal and policy and internal process developments as required.
- prepare and maintain reports and statistics including from the case management system as required by the Principal Solicitor and/or Chief Legal Officer
- promote the development and maintenance of the highest professional standards throughout the work and service of the Council and to conduct professional work in accordance with the codes set by the Legal Services Team including full use of the Council's case management system
- assist in research on legal questions arising from the work of the Council or its components or associated public bodies
- to work autonomously to prioritise their workload ensuring deadlines and agreed time frames are met to avoid unnecessary delays and increased council cost
- carry out other duties appropriate to the level of responsibility of the post as required from time to time by the Principal Solicitor and/or Chief Legal Officer
- To ensure confidentiality in all aspects of work undertaken.

Supplementary Accountabilities

- To provide support and cover with legal work within in the Child Care Team as and when required and requested.
- To work in other areas of the service as a Paralegal, as and when required, eg adults and

education subject to training and support

- To use the councils case management systems to ensure processes are modern efficient and effective
- Knowledge & Experience

Candidates must have substantial knowledge and experience in the following areas of business and will be required to provide evidence of this:

Some exposure to Legal work and experience in working within a legal office.

- Strong intellectual problem-solving abilities, including the ability to weigh arguments and substantiate judgments
- Ability to adapt and understand the working environment of the departments clients and to work creatively to meet the corporate objectives of those departments and clients.
- Ability to function independently, take responsibility and prioritise for own work
- Ability to handle a pressurised workload working to tight deadlines
- A desire to learn the framework of local government
- Strong diagnostic skills leading to sound judgement and decision making.
- Strong verbal and written communication skills - Effective Communicator- Clearly conveys information and ideas.
- A commercial acumen, understand the commercial and community impact

Qualifications

- To hold or be working towards an accredited paralegal legal qualification in family and child care law or equivalent

Decision Making

- To relay advice from other Solicitors on any matters including legal and policy related issues
- Ability to make decisions as to the conduct of the matters dealt with by the post holder, where relevant in consultation with Solicitors, including whether to commence or end proceedings, threshold and the social worker plans..

- Ability to make day to day decisions on case management and instruct the client department on actions required by them

Creativity and Innovation

- To be able to use own initiative to create, amend documentation and or process to fit the needs to the department which, subject to experience and with supervision, may involve creative drafting of bespoke documentation to meet the variety of needs for the client. The provision of legal advice on routine matters, and with appropriate supervision, and sometimes requiring extensive legal research and making a judgement on applicability or otherwise of legal principles on matters being dealt with.

<p><u>Job Scope</u></p> <p>Number and types of jobs managed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0 <p>Typical tasks supervised/allocated to others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To supervise and mentor other members of the Legal Team, as and when required. 	<p>Budget Holder</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p>Asset Responsibility:</p>	<p>No</p> <p>No</p>
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Contacts and Relationships

(how the role relates to the work of others i.e. officers, groups, committees, general public, members, partner organisations, internal and external contacts of the council)

- Internal Client departments, including officers at all levels, including Director level
- External parties, as and when required in the course of your duties.
- Experts and witnesses and their agencies
- Counsel and their chambers

Values and Behaviours

We strive to underpin our culture through strong management and authentic leadership, this means getting the management basics right, and ensuring what we commit to individually and collectively, we own and demonstrate accountability aiming to get things right first time. Building on this we also expect everyone at SBC to demonstrate and live our organisational values and behaviours , this means in our work we are:

Connected: We put Swindon and its people at the heart of everything we do.

We display a communication and behaviour style that promotes a positive Council identity in connecting with residents, customers, colleagues and other stakeholders ensuring a partnership approach to delivering our vision. Always asking, “is what I am doing in the best interests of Swindon and its people,”?

Resilient: We are forward thinking and work smart

We seek to identify where things can be improved, ensuring this learning is embedded, evaluated and built upon through a strong approach to continuous organisational development.

Brave: We respect and work together with our colleagues and customers to achieve success

We act in an emotionally intelligent way, setting positive examples around accountability, risk and governance. This will be delivered through developing ourselves and our teams to achieve the highest possible levels of productivity and performance.

Other Key Features of the role

(working environment / emotional / conditions i.e. regular outside work, unpleasant or hazardous conditions, practical demands such as standing, carrying or working in constrained positions, potential verbal abuse and aggression from people, or risk of injury).

Employee Signature:	Print Name:
Date:	
Line Managers Signature:	Print Name::
Date:	